

**Infant Toddler Developmental Standards Workgroup of the
Illinois Early Learning Council Infant Toddler Committee**

July 28, 2010

MEETING NOTES

Members Present- Chicago: Karen Yarbrough (Co-Chair), Jeanna Capito (Co-Chair), Samantha Aigner-Treworgy (Staffer), Barbara Abel, Christine Ryan, Sue Reynolds, Rima Malhotra, Sharonda Brown, Kathy Kern, Sara Rolen, Ashleigh Kirk, Mary Thomas, Virginia York, Candace Williams, Casey Winke Amayun, Lindsay Cochrane, Phyllis Glink, Joanne Kelly, Elizabeth Glassgow, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Dawn Thomas, Kim Dadisman, Rebecca Klein

Members Present- Springfield: Clare Eldredge, Jean Jackson, Kathy Davis, Chris Nation, Deb Widenhofer

Phone: Heather Moyer, Ted Burke, Melissa Veljasevic, Raydeane James, Theresa Hawley, Andi Sass, Bridget English, Mary English, Jon Korfmacher, Nicole Polash, Kristie Norwood, Sharon Wilson, Heather Shull

I. Introduction to the Project

Handouts: ITDS Executive Summary & California Assessment Diagram

Karen and Jeanna introduced the two-year project, funded by the McCormick Foundation, as a component of the overall vision for the early childhood landscape in Illinois. Using the California Assessment diagram as a model, the Infant-Toddler Early Learning Guidelines will be situated amidst the existing program guidelines, assessment tools, professional development standards, and other existing instruments in Illinois. A substantial focus of the project will be developing strategies for alignment and integration of these early learning guidelines with other components in the state systems.

II. Vision for the Project

The group had an open discussion around the goals and objectives for the project. Some consistent themes included utilizing these ELGs to increase program quality across a wide range of systems, helping to guide professional development for infant-toddler providers, and informing parents about developmentally appropriate practices. One of the resounding objectives for the ELGs throughout the conversation was to help standardize the expectations and communication around the complexities of infant-toddler development between providers in various service sectors. A few concerns were also raised regarding the development of these ELG's, specifically the need to ensure that they reflect the imbedded nature of child development within a cultural framework and family context. Additionally, workgroup participants stressed the importance of maintaining the integrity of infant-toddler development to avoid creating watered-down pre-k standards.

III. Project Overview and Process

Handouts: Short- and Long-Term Outcomes Document

The Co-Chairs outlined the procedure for making recommendations through the Early Learning Council and updated the group on the consultant hiring process. The workgroup's anticipated involvement includes reviewing and evaluating the consultant's research on other state ELG creation and

implementation processes, guiding the development of the Illinois ELG's, and generating an on-going implementation plan to ensure meaningful execution of the Infant-Toddler ELG's. While the objective of this document will be to create a common language across service systems, the major challenge will be "bringing it to light" in a manner that will have a positive impact on the quality of services offered to infants and toddlers. It was acknowledged that while implementation will begin during the lifespan of the grant, accomplishing the desired outcomes will be an on-going process beyond these first two years. While we currently have representatives from the broad range of systems working with infants and toddlers, additional ideas for work group members are welcome. We would like to have all interested individuals become involved as quickly as possible, so as to include their input throughout the process and avoid backtracking.

IV. Initial Considerations for the ITDS

a. Handouts: Content of Infant-Toddler ELG's Research Brief & State ELG Summary Chart
Karen introduced the "Content of Infant-Toddler Early Learning Guidelines" study, pointing to the key decision points to be determined by the workgroup (The full report will be emailed out to the group subsequent to the meeting). These include constructing age brackets, composing developmental domains, and considering coordination with other Illinois systems. Samantha briefly summarized the structure of other states' ELGs, including their alignment with other program specific standards, such as preschool and Head Start. Although most states outline the intention of the documents as creating a common language around infant-toddler development, there are a range of approaches. For example, some states ELGS are defined by developmental milestones that a child should reach by a certain age, while others describe developing competencies that are emerging in children throughout a developmental stage.

V. Additional Logistics

We anticipate holding bi-monthly meetings, although the next meeting will not be held until approximately November as the Co-Chairs will be on maternity leave until that time. During this time, the consultant will be hired and responsible for working on necessary research with other states and Illinois stakeholders. Much of the communication around this project will happen via email, and the work group will be asked to weigh-in with input on direction and documents for the project.

- A list of invitees will be emailed to the group and other suggestions of individuals who should be included can be emailed to Samantha Aigner-Treworgy as soon as possible.
- The consultant job description will be emailed out after the meeting, with a deadline of Monday, August 2, 2010 for all interested candidates.